HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA

Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

ACVA • NUMBER 088 • 1st SESSION • 42nd PARLIAMENT

EVIDENCE

Thursday, May 24, 2018

Chair

Mr. Neil Ellis

Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs

Thursday, May 24, 2018

● (1215)

[*English*]

The Chair (Mr. Neil Ellis (Bay of Quinte, Lib.)): I'll call the meeting to order. I apologize because we're running a bit behind. We'll try to get us back on track.

I'd like to welcome our two guests. As an individual, we have Mr. Dubé. From True Patriot Love Foundation, we have Ms. Joshi, Head of Granting and Strategic Partnerships.

We'll start our witness testimony, and we'll start with True Patriot Love.

Ms. Namita Joshi (Head of Granting and Strategic Partnerships, True Patriot Love Foundation):

Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Good afternoon, committee. It is an honour to appear before you today. My name is Namita Joshi and I am the Head of Granting and Strategic Partnerships at True Patriot Love Foundation.

True Patriot Love is a national charity dedicated to providing Canadian military and veteran families with the support they need and the hope they deserve. Since 2009 TPL has provided $25 million to fund innovative research and support 750 community-based programs across the country. By addressing the unique challenges resulting from military service, TPL has helped change the lives of more than 25,000 military families.

The True Patriot Love disbursement advisory committee was formed in 2016 to provide external advice to TPL's board of directors. The committee is chaired by a member of the TPL board of directors and has representation across the country from the business, research, government, and military sectors. The committee is also responsible for setting longer-term funding priorities for the organization that recognize emerging needs and opportunities for significant impact.

As an organization that strives to provide equitable funding opportunities across the country, TPL is committed to promoting communication and collaboration within the sector. We have strong relationships within the community and both within the Department of National Defence and Veterans Affairs Canada.

Our funding does not overlap with government funding but rather complements it and offers an opportunity to address gaps where they may be identified. As a registered charity, TPL also offers agility, flexibility, and the ability to provide "proof of concept" funding for programs in early stages of development.

Examples of successful collaboration include Prospect Human Services Forces@WORK, which received bridge funding earlier this year to ensure seamless delivery of transition services for veterans in Alberta.

In 2014, True Patriot Love raised $500,000 in private funds for the University of Southern California to Canadianize virtual reality software that is used in at least seven government-funded operational stress clinics across the country for the treatment of PTSD, or post-traumatic stress injury.

Our commitment of $5 million to the Canadian Institute for Military and Veteran Health Research at Queen's University will enable academic researchers to study key determinants of military and veteran health and strengthen community-based programs as a benefit outcome.

In 2016, we conducted an internal review of regional representation and noticed that there were no programs funded in the Far North. This recognition was a step in our efforts to address the need for increased programming in remote regions, in particular within the indigenous veteran population.

It is no surprise that postings to remote geographical regions, deployments, reintegration, and frequent moves may cause stress on military families. Layered on top of this, the process of transition and unique cultural characteristics, including belief systems and family dynamics, may also contribute to the challenges faced by indigenous veterans in seeking access to care.

True Patriot Love recognized the continuum of service of indigenous veterans at our 2016 Toronto tribute dinner. An honest effort was also made to offer a distance coaching program for families within the Canadian rangers in two different communities. Although at that time we were unsuccessful, our commitment was unwavering. Identified challenges include communication, geography, resources, and timing. Sometimes you have to try a few times before you succeed, and we're willing to do that.

Earlier this year TPL secured private funding for the Veterans Transition Network to deliver a unique program for indigenous veterans in Manitoba later this year. VTN is one of our long-standing program delivery partners. TPL's investment has played an instrumental role in transforming it from a Vancouver-based program into a national, bilingual program.

Through our national network, TPL has assisted VTN in identifying new communities that are in need, most recently in Prince Edward Island, Quebec, and Manitoba, and in raising local funds to support the delivery of the program.

TPL funding will support a VTN six-week pilot program dedicated to indigenous veterans in Manitoba. Working in partnership, we have the experience and ability to address regional and cultural needs within the veteran population. By engaging the experience of an indigenous adviser who has previously participated in the VTN program, it will be developed specifically for indigenous veterans to address cultural beliefs and practice. A robust communication plan, including personal outreach within the indigenous community in Manitoba to build trust and understanding, will be pivotal for delivery and expansion.

Program evaluation will occur immediately before, after, and at intervals of three, 12, and 18 months following the program. A variety of constructs have been linked to transition, such as quality of life, interpersonal well-being, and the ability to cope with life stressors, all of which will be measured. We are currently in the phase of confirming participation of a researcher who has worked within indigenous communities, is culturally informed, and is able to facilitate the building of relationships and trust.

The 2018 CIMVHR forum will provide an opportunity to discuss progress to date with a larger group of researchers and stakeholders in order to gain from collective experience. TPL recognizes that the strength of this initiative lies in collaboration with other entities. It is our hope that the dialogue will lead to further action.

As a result of a successful pilot project in Manitoba, we would like to see further expansion of programming. In an effort to transfer knowledge, TPL and VTN will develop a best practice guide to be shared with other community organizations interested in expanding their programs to include indigenous veterans.

As a final note, our intention is to create a culturally sensitive, practical guidebook that will draw on the strength of partners and educate service providers on a national level. We remain open to recommendation on other stakeholders who should be engaged and consulted to gain the deepest understanding of the topic before us.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

● (1220)

The Chair: Thank you.

Now we'll hear your testimony, Mr. Dubé.

Mr. Aurel Dubé (As an Individual): [*Witness speaks in Algonquin.*]

Good day, everybody. My name is Aurel Dubé. I am an Algonquin from the Kitigan Zibi community. First, I need to say that I am glad to see people who I shared an event with last year when I had the honour to be part of the 100th anniversary of Vimy in France. I can recognize some faces, and I'm really happy to meet these people again.

I served 22 years in the artillery in the Canadian army. I joined back in 1983, and I released after 22 years, in 2005. The reason I was released from the military is that, during a mission, I had an accident, and I couldn't do my job anymore. I was released for medical reasons after 22 years.

During my career, I was posted to many places. I was in Gagetown, Shawinigan, Val Cartier, and Shilo. I also had the opportunity to do some UN missions or NATO missions. I served my first UN tour back in 1987 when I served with United Peacekeeping in Cypress. I was there for a couple of months. After that, in 1995, I also had the privilege to serve with another UN mission. That was in Haiti when René Préval was elected as the president of Haiti. I was there for six or seven months. After that, my last mission, when I had my accident, was back in 1999 to 2000 when I served in Bosnia.

During my military career, I lived through many things. Some of those things were hard for me to go through, like when I was in Haiti. I was on a call once where we had to find an airplane that had crashed. We had to give first aid and find the black box of the aircraft that crashed.

When I lived through those things, I didn't know, but that was the beginning of my PTSD. In 2010, there was that big earthquake in Haiti, 15 years after I was there. I started to be affected by what I had lived through back in 1995. With the support of Veterans Affairs and my family, I sought and got help with Veteran Affairs and with mental health aid in Ottawa.

All this is to say that I've been out now since 2005, 13 years. I am still connected with the army because I worked as a civilian employee for 11 years after I released. Now I am working with Library and Archives Canada. My job basically is an analyst. I work for people who served in the military and want to seek help from Veteran Affairs. We all know that they need to prove that they were in the military, so I respond to their requests to provide them their file, because they want to go with Veterans Affairs.

Ever since I was released, I've reconnected with my own community in Kitigan Zibi. It is only after that you realize that many more people served our country, like people from my own community who served in the military. They went to the First World War as well as the Second World War.

It's really important when we suffer from any sickness. The first thing really is to realize and to admit that you are suffering from something, and after that, you need to know where to go to get help. For many people, it might be hard for them to find their way to get some help. In my main job today at Library and Archives Canada, I try to help these people and refer them to what to do after I provide them with their record.

● (1225)

Basically, when I first got the invitation to come here, I was supposed to represent Aboriginal Veterans Autochtones, but you have just met our president, Mr. Thibeau, so I was asked to talk about my own history or to tell my own story.

During my military career, in 1990, as we all know, we had the Oka crisis. I was at the Oka crisis for many months. Back then, I had a fight with my own family; they didn't want me to go to Oka. It was, however, my job to go and work for the military. It took a little while before I was forgiven for having been part of the Oka crisis.

As a matter of fact, I'm just coming back from DND now, because this week is Aboriginal Awareness Week. I'm just coming from NDHQ, but two years ago, I was also there and I met a great native girl, Waneek Horn-Miller. She's a lady who went to the Olympics. If you remember, back in 1990 during the Oka crisis, she was well known because she had been stabbed with a bayonet while protecting her daughter. Two years ago, when I had the opportunity to meet her, I asked her to forgive me for being part of the Oka crisis. This is what I wanted to share.

I could also maybe say that before, aboriginal people were not allowed to join the military. Today, we are still affected by people who gave away their Indian status because they didn't want to have the same thing happen that happened to their brothers when they served during the Second World War. Because they were native, they did not have all the benefits that other people had when they came back.

I know some people still living today who gave away their Indian status. Because they gave it away, today their kids and their grandkids don't have their status, just because their father served during the war and gave away their rights to have Indian status.

That is what I wanted to share with you.

The Chair: Thank you.

We'll start with questioning. We're going to have to do four-minute rounds, and we'll start with Mr. McColeman.

Mr. Phil McColeman (Brantford—Brant, CPC): Thank you first for being here, and thank you for your testimony today before the committee. It's appreciated.

Mr. Dubé, you said in your comments that you have been engaged in a consulting fashion helping other individuals who are making the transition from active service to veteran status. Of course, this effort by our committee is to find out whether there are specific issues for indigenous CAF members as they transition out of the military to veteran life.

Is there anything top of mind for you that is different for an indigenous soldier who is transitioning out of the military and entering into life as a veteran? Are there one or two things or more that are specifically different for them?

● (1230)

Mr. Aurel Dubé: I would say so. When aboriginal people release from the military, they leave their military family and go back to their own family back in the community or on the reserve. Once people go back to their community, it's sometimes hard to get in touch with either the military family or the Veterans Affairs family.

Because people have gotten out, they sometimes have problems getting back in touch to get support from Veterans Affairs. Sometimes it might be hard for them because they don't really know where to go. They will call Veterans Affairs' toll-free number. They will be told to prove some service, when they served, and all that. Then they will come to us and they will try to get their proof of service to show the dates when they were in the military.

I would say yes, these people sometimes are lost. They don't know really where to go. Sometimes it's the biggest step to take—the first step is always harder—but once you have taken that first step, things might be easier afterwards. The major thing is to take that first, big step.

Mr. Phil McColeman: From your background and your personal experience, why is it so difficult to access the inner workings of the transition process from being a CAF member to being...? As you've just described, one of the barriers to indigenous or first nation soldiers is that they're lost and they don't get the help they need to get the benefits of being a veteran. Why does that exist, in your opinion?

Mr. Aurel Dubé: I believe it has a lot to do with pride. When someone is proud of something, he will show it, but when that same person lives something bad, it's hard to admit that they're having a problem, so it's like going down. It's like losing the control of their own life. This is why sometimes, when you go deep, you live something that is hard, it's really hard to try to go to the good direction to try to find some help. Also, since we are proud, to go get that help, sometimes first we need to admit that we need help. Sometimes it's really hard to do.

I'll tell you a little story. During my career, I was an air observer, so I was leading the aircraft. I was a co-pilot, but I was not a pilot, so I had the map in my hand and I was leading the pilot where to go. My main job was to tell him where to go because I was liaising with the army on the ground. They teach you the drill that when you are lost in the helicopter—so when I don't know where I am on my map—first, I need to admit, "Sir, I'm lost," and then the pilot will give us a hand. The big thing is to raise your hand and say, "Sir, I am lost." "Sir, I'm sick and I need help." That is not easy to do.

Mr. Phil McColeman: I totally understand. I truly appreciate your sharing those perspectives in your roles and as a veteran.

That would lead me to think that the awareness within the process that is put in place of transitioning an indigenous soldier out needs to be recognized and acted on, in terms of making sure those people who may be in that situation that you just described are actually free to say it without the pressure of a system that just processes people on a uniform basis or on a one-style basis. Would you agree with that?

● (1235)

Mr. Aurel Dubé: Yes, I would. Right now, I know that the military have the depart with dignity program, so that when someone is released from the military, he will have what we call a "mug out". I have been part of many for the past year, and as an aboriginal veteran, we are trying to get involved in that and we are also trying to give our help for people, especially if they are aboriginal. We will try to go to these events and we will present something to the veteran. We will also try to get the community involved. We will try to have someone from the band office to go. If there is someone from his own community, that will help the guy when he is released from the military.

Aboriginals have a lot of powwows. At every powwow, you will have veterans. At every powwow I go to, I always meet new people and they mostly are people who will come to see us and they will say that they served in the navy, that they served in the military many years ago. They will try to connect with us. By connecting with us, at least we will be there to give aboriginal veterans help, if ever they need help.

Mr. Phil McColeman: Thank you for all you're doing.

The Chair: Mr. Bratina.

Mr. Bob Bratina (Hamilton East—Stoney Creek, Lib.): Before I address our topic today, Mr. Chair, I want to share with members of the veterans affairs committee a loss of a very wonderful veteran in Hamilton. His name was Fred Engelbrecht. He was in his 98th year. He was on the beach on August 19, 1942, at Dieppe. He was one of the last two survivors of Dieppe. He gave the "We will remember" speech last year. Even though Fred was 98, we're actually shocked that we've lost him. I wanted to share that with our group.

Mr. Dubé, how were you recruited? That's one question, generally, about the recruiting of indigenous military. In your units, was there a camaraderie among indigenous veterans? Did you know two or three or a dozen? Was it a common occurrence in your experience to have fellow indigenous comrades in your units?

Mr. Aurel Dubé: I joined back in 1983. I was raised in a foster family, so at 18 years of age, we were basically kicked out of the family. I went to school over here because I wanted to become a police officer. I went to school, but because I was on my own at 18 years of age, basically school was not really meant for me.

I had some friends back then who wanted to join the military. We wanted to join the reserve unit here, on the other side of the bridge, the Régiment de Hull, so at one point I just went to the recruiting centre, did the test, and a couple of months later, I was enrolled.

I joined as a gunner, field gunner artillery, and I served for 22 years in the artillery. When I joined back in 1983, it was not nice to say we were aboriginal, because people really did not like that, and we didn't want to say that we were native.

Things have changed. When we went to the Oka crisis back in 1990, they started to give courses on harassment, for *sensibilisation* for other people. So I would say that yes, I did meet a lot of aboriginals during my career, but I would say that I met many more after I was released in 2005.

● (1240)

Mr. Bob Bratina: Thank you.

Ms. Joshi, I'm curious about the software at the University of Southern California. You raised money to Canadianize the software. Could you explain that? Did that include incorporating indigenous changes in that software? I'm curious about what that was.

Ms. Namita Joshi: Certainly. Health services had recognized that virtual reality therapy may be useful in the treatment of PTSD as a result of service. Canada at that time did not have virtual reality software. The United States did and it was developed at the University of Southern California, the difference being that the uniforms were American, and the tanks were American.

With our investment, we were able to Canadianize it by changing the tanks and the uniforms, so that they would identify with Canadian soldiers and the Canadian military experience. It has been found that, particularly with some of the younger generations, virtual reality does offer some support in the treatment of PTSD. The feedback that we have received so far has been positive. We currently have 54 clinicians who have been trained on it. To my knowledge, it has not been further specialized for the indigenous population. Certainly within subpopulations, there are certain characteristics that we need to study and be aware of, although many of the challenges that are faced are probably across the board. It requires communication, education, and outreach to actually identify where the differences are or whether it's simply that people are unaware of the services that are available.

Mr. Bob Bratina: Thank you, Mr. Chair.

The Chair: Mr. Johns.

Mr. Gord Johns (Courtenay—Alberni, NDP): Thank you.

First, Mr. Dubé, I would like to thank you for welcoming us on your territory. I would also like to acknowledge the Anishinabe and the Algonquin people. It's an honour to be here. I want to thank you for your service as well, sir. It's very much appreciated.

I'll start with you, Ms. Joshi.

One thing that we've seen in the United States is that 30% of the caseworkers they hired are former vets, and it's because vets have that unique understanding of veterans' issues. Certainly culturally they understand a lot of the issues. We haven't set clear targets here in Canada, nor have we taken the aggressive approach of having vets in such positions to be able to work with veterans. Do you see that as something that would help your clients?

Ms. Namita Joshi: True Patriot Love doesn't fund individuals directly. We fund Canadian registered charities. Part of it is out of the scope of the work we're engaged in.

I think the veteran population is unique in the sense that it's never just about self, that it is always about reaching back and helping the person who's coming behind you. That sense of camaraderie continues. We certainly see it and hear about it through the programs we fund. That's one of the strengths of the community. That's also why many peer-to-peer groups develop, and why it's important for people with shared experiences.

We're hoping the VTN program for the indigenous community in Manitoba will offer that shared experience, so that people feel comfortable and open in talking about experiences, and that perhaps, as those who support programs across the country, we can learn something ourselves. I think we're just at the beginning of that. It's a lot of work, but we're willing to do it.

Mr. Gord Johns: We did hear about some of the challenges, especially for people in remote communities, and the opportunities for digital outreach. You touched on that. Can you speak a little more about your...?

Ms. Namita Joshi: I think that comes down to finding the right partners and developing those relationships. The initial programs we were looking to roll out were in northern Ontario or in northern B.C. and the Yukon. Both of those would have been newer regions for TPL, particularly within the communities that we were reaching into. I think it takes time to build trust. People have to understand who you are, what you represent, and why they should feel comfortable working with you. I believe extending that is the stage we're at right now.

● (1245)

Mr. Gord Johns: Thank you. That's super.

Mr. Dubé, could you identify better ways we can engage and support aboriginal veterans in removing barriers? Can you identify any in particular that haven't been touched on today?

Mr. Aurel Dubé: Veterans Affairs has been doing well lately. They are just about to start or have already started a trip to show they are there to help. Sometimes it's hard to find out where to get help, but when people from Veterans Affairs go to those places, people will go because the word will be passed on. I know they are about to go down east, and most of the people who need help are aware of that, so for sure they will be there.

It's communication. When we have good communication, we know they will be there. People will go to meet these people, and at least the first connection will be done that way.

Mr. Gord Johns: That's super.

Are there any culturally appropriate questions you would like to see us asking veterans, so we might be able to draw out some of the ways we can help support them?

Mr. Aurel Dubé: I know it is already being done, but it's to get the word from the elders. An elder is someone aboriginal people respect a lot. Whatever those people think, we need to think about what they are telling us to do. If we're there, and we listen to our elders, they will help us to do what is better for our veterans.

The Chair: Thank you.

Ms. Lambropoulos.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos (Saint-Laurent, Lib.): Thank you both for being with us today and for all the work you do with our veterans.

Ms. Joshi, you mentioned that certain issues often gravitate toward communication, geography, and resources. Of the indigenous veterans who come to see you, what are the most common issues they raise about Veterans Affairs? Can you speak more specifically about these issues?

Ms. Namita Joshi: As an organization we are at least one step removed from the individuals or the veterans who are receiving services. I myself have not yet had outreach from an indigenous veteran seeking support or providing feedback on either programming that exists within the community or relationships within the government, so I can't speak to that.

What is promising is our program partners have received positive feedback from indigenous veterans who have participated in their programs because they felt their needs were being met. Part of how the program in Manitoba came into being was through direct feedback to VTN from an indigenous participant who found it to be beneficial and thought that others within his community would also benefit. That's how TPL hears about what's going on in the community, it's through our charitable partners.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: You also mentioned earlier that you collaborate with other entities, as you're saying again.

Ms. Namita Joshi: Yes.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Is that the main thing you receive from them? How else do you collaborate and share the load?

Ms. Namita Joshi: We're a funding organization. There are many charities across the country that are working to support military serving members, veterans, and their families. Each of them has unique circumstances and are experts in program delivery. We are experts in fundraising.

My role at the organization is to understand what makes those charities experts and then for us to leverage some of the knowledge we have from our bird's-eye view across the country in terms of how we can help strengthen them. If we see something that's happening successfully in Alberta, there's no need for it not to be shared in Atlantic Canada. That's the role we hope to play: to facilitate those conversations. Programs aren't necessarily speaking to each other, but they're speaking to us.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Thank you very much.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dubé, can you tell us about the obstacles you have had to face as an indigenous veteran?

● (1250)

By that, I mean obstacles that do not really affect other veterans. If you have not experienced difficulties of that kind, have you observed that some veterans have to face more obstacles than others, simply because they are indigenous?

Mr. Aurel Dubé: In terms of the support provided by the Department of Veterans Affairs, I have not really come up against any obstacles. As for other individuals, it is a matter of finding the first door to knock on, as I said at the outset. To communicate with people in that situation, you need an address and a telephone number. That is really the most difficult step for them to get over, but, once the door is open, one thing leads to another, and it is easier for them to ask for the help they need.

Ms. Emmanuella Lambropoulos: Okay, thank you.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

We have to go to two-minute rounds.

Mr. Fraser.

Mr. Colin Fraser (West Nova, Lib.): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thanks very much to both of you for being here.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Dubé, the first time we met, I think, was on the trip we took on the occasion of the 100th anniversary of the battle of Vimy Ridge. It is good to see you again.

Can you tell us a little about how aware young people, actually all Canadians, are to the military contribution that indigenous people have made, and about the importance of events such as the indigenous sunrise ceremony held at the 100th anniversary of the battle of Vimy Ridge?

Could you tell us how important it is to hold that kind of ceremony or event so that the indigenous contribution to Canadian history is recognized?

Mr. Aurel Dubé: Yes, sure.

During National Veterans Week, the first week in November, more and more indigenous veterans are volunteering to give presentations in schools. The goal of the presentations is really to talk to young schoolkids about the indigenous contributions in the first and second World Wars. Given that it has perhaps been poorly taught in the media, we are making up for lost time today. We are telling indigenous communities, and the students, that their parents and grandparents served in the First World War or the Second World War.

In my own community, there is a cemetery. I go there sometimes, but it was only a few years ago that I discovered some commemorative monuments there. The monuments are dedicated to those who served in the First World War and the Second World War.

Today, we have the opportunity to appear in schools and teach our young people about that. Everything we are going to teach is indigenous. We all experienced it in Vimy during the sunrise ceremony, an indigenous tradition. When we held that ceremony, the aim was to free the spirits of all the veterans who lost their lives at the battle of Vimy Ridge, during the First World War. The aim of the ceremony was to allow their spirits to return to their communities and their families.

Mr. Colin Fraser: Thank you very much.

[*English*]

The Chair: Thank you.

We will end now with Ms. Wagantall for the last two minutes.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall (Yorkton—Melville, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair.

Ms. Joshi, I have built a strong relationship with a group in Saskatchewan called Audeamus. They are certified service dog trainers who work with veterans. Again, it's the realization that training, pairing, and ongoing care between veterans and these dogs is significant to their healing with respect to a lot of conditions. There is a lot of research, with grants, going on at the University of Saskatchewan and the University of Regina. The goal is to set standards, hopefully, for Saskatchewan, and then to be part of determining those national standards, which I think are all high priorities for the type of organization you're a part of.

How do you determine out of all of the various options out there who would receive funding if this is a possibility because I believe they have applied in the past?

I only have two minutes—sorry, but this could take an hour—so I would also like to ask Mr. Dubé a question.

For first nations, aboriginal, Métis, and Inuit individuals, when it comes to healing, I know that spiritual and natural sources of healing are important. Have you heard about or do you sense a need for veterans service dogs to be part of that process, or are they already?

Between the two of you.... Sorry, I have very little time.

● (1255)

Mr. Aurel Dubé: I would say for sure, just like they've done with Correctional Service Canada for a couple of years, they have brought in the aboriginal culture so the inmates can do their own healing in the traditional way. As soon as we speak about the traditional way, people will go into it.

Yes, it would be a good thing to have that with Veterans Affairs, to do sweat lodges and things like that.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: With regard to the animals, the service dogs, is that something that has been used at all as a means of—

Mr. Aurel Dubé: I have never seen a service dog with aboriginal people.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: That's interesting. Thank you.

Ms. Namita Joshi: We have a lot of faith in our disbursement advisory committee, which provides us with expert opinion in the decisions that are made with regard to funding. In terms of service dogs in particular, it is determined on a case-by-case basis, because we are still awaiting standards. It's important, and at the same time, we certainly are aware of the value and the anecdotal evidence that exists on the benefit that certain animals can bring to veterans.

Mrs. Cathay Wagantall: That's what they are working on at the university level, I believe, with the research, to give more than anecdotal evidence, but rather the actual.

Wonderful. Thank you. I appreciate that.

The Chair: Sorry, but we're out of time. If there's anything you want to add to your testimony today, put it in writing and send to our clerk. She will distribute it to the committee.

On behalf of the committee, I would like to thank both of you for all the service you continue to do for the men and women who serve and have served our country.

I need to suspend for 20 seconds and then we need to go in camera. I need something passed. I would ask the room to clear quickly, and we will come back for a minute. Then we will get ourselves back to the House.

Thank you again.

[*Proceedings continue in camera*]

Published under the authority of the Speaker of the House of Commons

SPEAKER'S PERMISSION

The proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees are hereby made available to provide greater public access. The parliamentary privilege of the House of Commons to control the publication and broadcast of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees is nonetheless reserved. All copyrights therein are also reserved.

Reproduction of the proceedings of the House of Commons and its Committees, in whole or in part and in any medium, is hereby permitted provided that the reproduction is accurate and is not presented as official. This permission does not extend to reproduction, distribution or use for commercial purpose of financial gain. Reproduction or use outside this permission or without authorization may be treated as copyright infringement in accordance with the *Copyright Act*. Authorization may be obtained on written application to the Office of the Speaker of the House of Commons.

Reproduction in accordance with this permission does not constitute publication under the authority of the House of Commons. The absolute privilege that applies to the proceedings of the House of Commons does not extend to these permitted reproductions. Where a reproduction includes briefs to a Committee of the House of Commons, authorization for reproduction may be required from the authors in accordance with the *Copyright Act*.

Nothing in this permission abrogates or derogates from the privileges, powers, immunities and rights of the House of Commons and its Committees. For greater certainty, this permission does not affect the prohibition against impeaching or questioning the proceedings of the House of Commons in courts or otherwise. The House of Commons retains the right and privilege to find users in contempt of Parliament if a reproduction or use is not in accordance with this permission.

Also available on the House of Commons website at the following address: http://www.ourcommons.ca

Publié en conformité de l'autorité du Président de la Chambre des communes

PERMISSION DU PRÉSIDENT

Les délibérations de la Chambre des communes et de ses comités sont mises à la disposition du public pour mieux le renseigner. La Chambre conserve néanmoins son privilège parlementaire de contrôler la publication et la diffusion des délibérations et elle possède tous les droits d'auteur sur celles-ci.

Il est permis de reproduire les délibérations de la Chambre et de ses comités, en tout ou en partie, sur n'importe quel support, pourvu que la reproduction soit exacte et qu'elle ne soit pas présentée comme version officielle. Il n'est toutefois pas permis de reproduire, de distribuer ou d'utiliser les délibérations à des fins commerciales visant la réalisation d'un profit financier. Toute reproduction ou utilisation non permise ou non formellement autorisée peut être considérée comme une violation du droit d'auteur aux termes de la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*. Une autorisation formelle peut être obtenue sur présentation d'une demande écrite au Bureau du Président de la Chambre.

La reproduction conforme à la présente permission ne constitue pas une publication sous l'autorité de la Chambre. Le privilège absolu qui s'applique aux délibérations de la Chambre ne s'étend pas aux reproductions permises. Lorsqu'une reproduction comprend des mémoires présentés à un comité de la Chambre, il peut être nécessaire d'obtenir de leurs auteurs l'autorisation de les reproduire, conformément à la *Loi sur le droit d'auteur*.

La présente permission ne porte pas atteinte aux privilèges, pouvoirs, immunités et droits de la Chambre et de ses comités. Il est entendu que cette permission ne touche pas l'interdiction de contester ou de mettre en cause les délibérations de la Chambre devant les tribunaux ou autrement. La Chambre conserve le droit et le privilège de déclarer l'utilisateur coupable d'outrage au Parlement lorsque la reproduction ou l'utilisation n'est pas conforme à la présente permission.

Aussi disponible sur le site Web de la Chambre des communes à l'adresse suivante : http://www.noscommunes.ca